

**For Immediate Release  
October 19, 2004**

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### **DCS Commissioner to Address South Central CSA's "Share Your Mission" Conference**

**NASHVILLE, Tenn.** - The Department of Children's Services Commissioner Viola P. Miller will be the keynote speaker at the South Central Community Services Agency's "Share Your Mission" Conference on Thursday, Oct. 21, from 9-10 a.m. at First Baptist Church, located at 2790 Pulaski Hwy., in Columbia, Tenn. The Commissioner's speech will be followed by a question-and-answer session.

More than 100 registrants are scheduled to attend the conference, to be held from 9 a.m.-noon, including 70 individuals and 41 exhibitors, among them the UT Agriculture Extension Office, community colleges, career centers, technological centers and others. Official registration ended on Oct. 1, but attendees may register until the day of the conference. Registrants are asked to bring a non-perishable food item to be divided among case managers for the clients they serve or for food baskets for families during the holidays.

This is the first time the South Central CSA has held its conference in two years. Initially intended to be an annual event, the conference was held in 2001 and 2002, but went on hiatus in 2003, when the agency did not have an executive director in place.

"What we're hoping to produce is communication between providers, vendors, churches and anyone who provides services to children and families in our communities. The first step is to have knowledge about who's out there and who's providing what," says South Central CSA executive director Larry Post, who assumed the position in February of this year.

The South Central CSA aims to provide timely, cost effective and appropriate services that are beneficial to the health, well being, stability and safety children and families by developing, coordinating and utilizing every available community resource. The South Central CSA serves children and families in Bedford, Coffee, Giles, Hickman, Lawrence, Lewis, Lincoln, Marshall, Maury, Moore, Perry and Wayne counties, with a range of programs, including children's special services, family crisis intervention, and the health advocacy unit, to name a few.

The conference was formerly held in two installments, one for each of the east and west portions of the counties the CSA serves. But this year's single centralized session will help foster a commitment to ongoing communication.

"It's time to start discussing what the issues are, where the resources are available and how we pool these to meet the needs of our families, children and communities," Post explains. "How do we provide information to families without gearing them toward a database or a Web site? We want to at least start the conversation and start the planning."

"We're hoping people will want to become part of a forum to discuss what happened at our conference, what they're lacking, how we can help, and what they can do to fill those gaps and meet those needs," adds Marlisa Wallace, community services coordinator for South Central CSA.

The Tennessee Department of Children's Services was established to provide the best possible care for children and youth who are in state custody, or at risk of entering custody, and their families. Services provided by DCS include child protective services, foster care, adoption, programs for delinquent youth, probation/aftercare, and treatment and rehabilitation programs for identified youth.

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